Australian Bureau of Statistics

Census
100 years 1911–2011
9 August 2011

EDUCATION SERVICES UNIT
Activity: 7.1 Beginner

Name: _____

Date: _____

Census 2011

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is responsible for developing and administering Australia's Census of Population and Housing. This activity will help you understand the processes of a Census by matching frequently asked questions with their answers.

1 List 3 or 4 questions that you think people might want to know about the Census. Also think about who might ask these questions.

- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

2 Compare your responses with someone else in your class. Write down a question that was different to yours.

.....

.....

3 Discuss with your class what questions other people had.

4 Look at the questions listed in the table on Page 2 and:

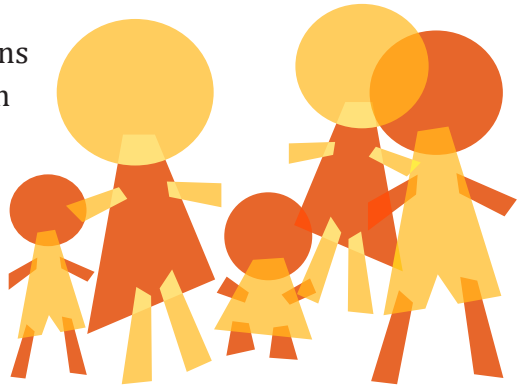
a Place a tick next to any that are the same as ones raised by your class.

b Use the numbers 1–11 to show the order that you think the questions will be in.

c Discuss your answers with your class. The beginning and end questions of your list should be similar. Questions in the middle are harder to put into order.

d With your teacher's help, write the agreed number into column 3 to help you complete the next question.

5 On pages 2, 3 and 4 there are answers to the questions shown in the table. Cut the statements out and match them to the correct question.
Note: definitions of words in bold in the statements appear in the glossary.



Name: _____

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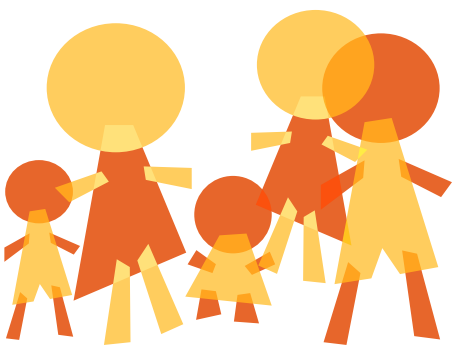
Table for Q4

Question	On my list? ✓ or ✗	Order 1-11	Class order
Is it compulsory?			
Who uses Census information?			
How does the ABS make sure of my privacy?			
How secure is the eCensus?			
Is my information going to be provided to other government agencies such as Centrelink, Tax Office or Department of Housing?			
Why is the Census needed?			
What are the benefits of having a Census?			
How are the Census results used?			
What is the eCensus?			
What is the Census?			
Who is counted in the Census?			

Sentences for Q5: *Cut out the sentences, match them with the appropriate question in the table and then write the question's number in the box.*

☐ The **Census** is important for communities, private groups and all levels of government to help plan services and facilities. **Federal government money** like the GST for the states and territories is also based on **Census** figures.



Q5: *Continued*

- to **estimate** the population of each state, territory and local government area.
- to determine **electoral areas** and calculate the number of Members to be elected to the **House of Representatives**.
- to determine the sharing of **Federal government money** to the states.
- to give governments and others information they can use to planning, administration, policy development and evaluation activities.
- to help plan basic services such as housing, social security, transport, education, industry, shops and hospitals.

No! By law the **ABS** must protect the **privacy** of people and cannot give information that can identify anyone to any other group. Organisations outside the **ABS** will not be given data about an individual person or individual household. By law all **ABS** staff must never release personal information outside the **ABS**. By law organisations such as the Tax Office and credit reference groups cannot have access to personal details from the **Census**.

The **eCensus** is an electronic option for returning your **Census** form, which allows you to complete the Census via the Internet.

The **Census** includes all people, except foreign diplomats and their families, who are in Australia on **Census Night**. This includes:

- All visitors to Australia.
- Homeless people.
- People on aeroplanes travelling between Australian destinations on **Census Night**.
- All children including newborn babies born before midnight on **Census Night**.
- People in detention centres.
- People in prison.
- Transport drivers on the road.
- People in hospitals.

The **ABS** has an excellent record of maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of the information provided to it over 100 years of operations. All **Census** forms are **pulped** after use.

The **Census** of Population and Housing is the largest statistical operation undertaken by the **ABS**. It aims to find the exact number of people in Australia on **Census Night**, their main characteristics and their **dwellings**.

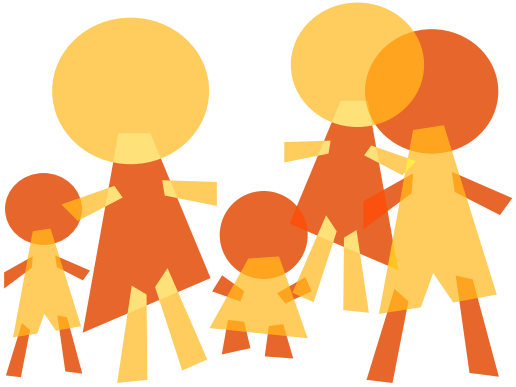
Community organisations, private institutions and all levels of government use **Census** numbers for many planning decisions such as where to provide services for **elderly** and young people. The number of seats each state and territory has in the House of Representatives is also based on **Census** figures. **Census** information is used as the basis for allocation of **GST** revenue to the states and territories.

Q5: *Continued*

☐ **eCensus** data sent to the ABS via the Internet is not able to be read by anyone other than the ABS. The **ABS** uses the strongest **encryption** technology available. At the end of the **Census**, the hard disk drives that store information are thoroughly wiped under supervision.

☐ Yes. The **Census** and Statistics Act (1905) which **authorises** the **Census** also provides for the compulsory completion of the Census form. On Census Night, you are asked to answer the questions on the **Census** form. If you do not answer the questions, the Australian Statistician has the power to direct you to provide the information.

☐ **Census** information is used by all sections of the community, from state and federal government to town planners, community groups, students, large and small businesses and more.



Name: _____

Date: _____

Glossary of Census and related terms

ABS:	the Australian Bureau of Statistics is the national agency responsible for developing and administering the Census
Authorises:	gives permission for, allows
Benefits:	advantages
Census:	a collection of information about everyone in a population. The Census of Population and Housing aims to measure the number of persons in Australia, their key characteristics, and their dwellings.
Census Night:	a night set aside for everyone to record their details on the Census form
Compulsory:	must be completed
Dwellings:	buildings people live in
eCensus:	is a Census form that can be completed and returned via the Internet
Elderly:	older people
Electoral areas:	an area described in law that can elect one member to the federal, state or territory lower houses of parliament
Encryption:	scrambling information or putting it into code so that it cannot be read
Estimate:	a number based on available information
FAQ:	frequently asked questions
Federal government money:	money from the Australian government
Foreign diplomats:	public servants who represent other countries' governments but live in Australia
GST:	money gathered by the government from the Goods and Services tax
House of Representatives:	one of the two houses of the Australian Federal Parliament—sometimes called the 'lower house'
Privacy:	keeping personal details private
Pulped:	crushed and mixed with water